

# THE CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST SAVIOUR AND ST MARY OVERY



ENGLISH POLICY  
September 2021

## **Our vision**

At Cathedral Primary School, we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school and where possible the creative curriculum and ICT will be used as tools. Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim for our pupils to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in performances through their time at Cathedral School.

At Cathedral Primary School we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

## **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014)

## **Curriculum delivery**

In reception through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons. A clear lesson objective and success criteria are a feature of all English lessons. Classroom displays may support learning in the classrooms. Self-assessment is used to improve writing. The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. We encourage children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate.

We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading which should include the whole curriculum.

### **Spoken Language**

The four strands of spoken language: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others.
- being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.
- helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- by developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

### **Reading**

Pupils have opportunities to undertake in shared and independent reading throughout the school. A diverse range of group reading books and a staged reading scheme are available. We use the Little Wandle Phonics books to support early reading development, and follow the Oxford Reading Tree Scheme which exposes children to a wide range of rich and classic texts. In addition to this, we also send children home with books that they can read from the classroom as we recognise that enjoying books is an important part of becoming a life-long reader. When it is felt appropriate for individual children, they may become 'free readers' and choose from the school library. Reading age tests and comprehension exercises are undertaken throughout the year to identify children who require extra support with their reading.

Home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of the child's development. In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a reading

record where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading.

## **Writing**

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

## **Handwriting**

Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least once a week and more frequently in the foundation stage. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using a range of resources. The national expectation at the end of Year 6 is that children will join their handwriting. Staff use resources from Cripps and Twinkl Handwriting to teach individual letter joins with the cursive style. This begins in Year 1 with handwriting lessons following a clear scheme of progression. As the children move up through the school they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent handwriting.

## **Cross-Curricular Links and ICT**

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links where relevant. They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

### **Inclusion**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More able children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Children with identified SEND in English receive tailored support from one-to-one learning support.
- Children who are identified as having additional needs with reading, receive extra support from TAs and CT.
- More able children in English are identified and challenged appropriately. Challenges for these gifted pupils are provided within English lessons or in addition through a range of wider opportunities.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents can play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using school planners and a tool for communication between school and home. Parents also support the school by coming in to hear readers during the school day. Many parents support Spanish day by offering to come and read stories to the children. Parents provide support for handwriting, spellings and various genres of writing that may be set for homework.